TRACKS 2006 ATLANTA, GA

Implementing The Tracking Network

breakout ABSTRACT

Abstract No. 3

TITLE

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DATA NEEDS FOR IDENTIFYING ENVIRONMENTALLY BURDENED COMMUNITIES

TRACK

Collaboration/Diversity/Coordination

OBJECTIVES

This presentation will discuss the most pressing environmental health data needs, from US EPA's perspective, for identifying the most environmentally burdened communities.

SUMMARY

US EPA is currently developing a national tool using a set of indicators to proactively identify, in a consistent manner, potential disproportionately high and adversely affected areas (“Areas with Potential Environmental Justice Concerns”) to assist US EPA in making fair and efficient resource deployment decisions. US EPA will present an overview of the tool and discuss the most pressing environmental health data needs for this tool. One pressing need is that US EPA lacks an understanding of environmental health vulnerabilities and how they can be quantified. Vulnerability is the concept that disadvantaged, underserved, and overburdened communities start with pre-existing deficits of both a physical and social nature which make the effects of environmental pollution more, and in some cases, unacceptably burdensome. In order to address this research need, US EPA Region 9 has funded and partnered with UC Santa Cruz, Brown University, Occidental College, and the California Environmental Health Tracking program on a research project to evaluate vulnerability indicators and how they affect the relationship between air pollution and adverse birth outcomes. The results of this project will assist US EPA in locating the most environmentally vulnerable and impacted communities so that US EPA can work towards reducing those impacts by targeting inspection and enforcement actions, encouraging voluntary reductions, and requiring mitigations in these communities.

AUTHOR(S):

Debbie Lowe, M.P.H.
US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9

Rachel Morello-Frosch, Brown University
Manuel Pastor, UC Santa Cruz
James Sadd, Occidental College
Paul English, California Environmental Health Tracking Program
Matthew Lakin, US EPA
Tim Watkins, US EPA

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

National Environmental Public Health Tracking Program